



Congressional Human Rights Caucus Staff Briefing:

Human Trafficking in Thailand: An Update

Friday, February 9, 2007
10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Room 2200 Rayburn HOB

Please join the Congressional Human Rights Caucus for a staff briefing with three distinguished Thai officials directly involved in combating trafficking in Thailand. The delegation will address current issues of concern relating to human trafficking in Thailand.

Thailand is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced labor. Thai women are trafficked to Australia, Japan, Europe, and North America for commercial sexual exploitation, while a significant number of men, women, and children from Burma, Laos, Cambodia, and China are economic migrants who wind up in forced or bonded labor and sexual exploitation in Thailand.

Given the widespread sex tourism in Thailand, women and children tend to be the principal target of human trafficking activities. They are forced into labor, marriage, domestic servitude, prostitution, and other kinds of coerced work. Traffickers use intimidation and physical force to achieve their goal, taking advantage of frequently harsh economic realities of Thai families and villages. The trafficking-related corruption in the police force makes it even easier for the ringleaders and protectors to operate.

Before the overthrow of the Thaksin government by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin on September 19, 2006, the 2006 United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report, reflected some progress in Thailand in applying greater law enforcement efforts to fight trafficking and providing care for the victims. Still, Thailand was placed on a Tier 2 level, signifying that Thailand does not fully comply with the minimum standards defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

The 2006 military coup sets a new background for the issues relating to human trafficking, providing the government with more urgent problems, thus possibly pushing back human trafficking and the effort to contain the problem from/on the policy agenda.

To discuss this important issue we will welcome as expert witnesses:

Police Major-General Chatchawal Suksomjit, Royal Thai Police

Mr. Kamjorn Nakchuen, Permanent Secretary's Office

Mrs. Rarinthip Sirorat, Director of the National Operation Center on Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking

We look forward to your attendance at this important event. Please contact Jeppe Fogtmann (Rep. Lantos) at x6-5295 or Molly Miller (Rep. Wolf) at x5-5136.

Sincerely,

Tom Lantos, M.C.
Co-Chair, CHRC

Frank R. Wolf, M.C.
Co-Chair, CHRC